



COUNTY of McHENRY

McHENRY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
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PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Peter Austin, McHenry County Administrator

McHenry County EMA Director Graduates from FEMA National Emergency Management Advanced Academy

David Christensen, McHenry County Emergency Management Agency Director, graduated from FEMA's National Emergency Management Advanced Academy on Friday, July 15, 2016. Christensen successfully completed the full curriculum that provides the strategic level training and education and the essential skills needed for emergency management professionals to manage dynamic and resilient emergency management programs.

Christensen completed the four one week resident courses in the Advanced Academy including: A Survey of Advanced Concepts in Emergency Management, Assessment and Application of Professional Style in Emergency Management, Advanced Concepts and Issues in the Emergency Management Organization, and Advanced Concepts and Issues in the Emergency Management Community and Profession.

FEMA's National Emergency Management Advanced Academy reinforces the qualities needed to manage emergency management programs, provides relevant management theories and concepts, and utilizes appropriate case studies. Advanced Academy participants work within a collaborative environment on projects and establish a network of their peers. The Academy is designed for Emergency Management mid-level managers wanting to advance their skillset. Students learn skills critical to performing emergency management



Photo by **Shane Gibbon**

Emmitsburg, MD – Superintendent Tony Russell is shown congratulating Christensen as he graduates.

responsibilities, such as: program management and oversight, effective communication at all levels, integrated collaboration, and strategic thinking, along with completing a Research Project one month prior to attending the final course. The Advanced Academy provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their critical thinking ability through a guided research project. Students apply the key learning concepts from the Advanced Academy curriculum relative to their own skillsets and abilities within their organizations, and their own performance environments.

Christensen's research project was on the various methodologies and virtual systems used to maintain situational awareness in an Emergency Operations Center. His paper demonstrated how cyber tools can enhance and expedite operations both in quality and quantitatively. These programs can be force multipliers, yet, it was also discovered that they should not be the total focus in an operations center. "David's professionalism and knowledge of emergency management is an invaluable asset to our organization" said McHenry County Administrator Peter Austin. "Advancing David's education and proficiency of emergency preparedness will further improve the resilience of communities in McHenry County."

Christensen graduated alongside 33 fellow students in his class at the Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, MD.



For more information on FEMA's training classes through the Basic, Advanced, and Executive Academies, or other emergency management courses, go to: <http://training.fema.gov/empp/>.